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## State of the City Address

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### MAYOR SEES BRIGHT FUTURE FOR ALGONA

Troy Linnell's first State of the City speech declares, "It's a very exciting time to live in Algona"

ALGONA — March 27, 2023 — In his first state of the city address since becoming Algona's Mayor, Troy Linnell sounded an upbeat tone regarding the future of the south King County city.

In remarks delivered at the start of the evening's city council meeting, Linnell acknowledged that the past several years have been challenging, but said that Algona is "coming out of the COVID pandemic with strength and purpose." He thanked the council for their collaboration in maintaining the city's commitment to those it serves and in being good stewards of local tax dollars. Linnell noted that the city budget was balanced and that actual expenditures came in under that balanced budget figure, calling that result "a level of fiscal discipline that is rare – if not unique – within government entities in our region."

Over the next three to five years, Linnell said the population of Algona is expected to grow by nearly 50 percent, and that it could double over a slightly longer time period. He attributed that projected growth to the area's natural beauty, its advantageous location near regional employment and transportation centers, and the fact that Algona offers "some of the last affordable housing in the region."

"Mix all of those attributes with a friendly, small-town environment where people are more likely to wave to their neighbors than shout at them," said Linnell, "and you have a very attractive place to live."

In discussing the projected growth, he said, "I believe that growth can be accommodated without losing what we already have and what makes Algona special," noting that local residents consider Algona "a small city with a big

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heart.”

Linnell noted that Algona’s city-operated transit service and its local community center — both of which are unusual for a city of its size — represent “the very sense of community that we must protect as we grow. We need to challenge ourselves to grow in ways that marry the new with the old, ensuring Algona remains a great place to work, live, and raise a family.”

One way to do that, Linnell said, is to focus on the future of Algona’s downtown area, with the goal of making it the hub of the community and a walkable area that brings local residents together. Existing buildings offer excellent potential for redevelopments offering a combination of ground-level retail spaces and affordable housing above, he said.

Linnell added that the community will have another important opportunity to help define its future when the area’s existing transfer station is decommissioned. Moving that station will create a prime 25acre site available for re-development, and developers have already expressed interest in the site.

One of Linnell’s goals moving forward is to solicit more involvement from local residents in decisions like the future of the transfer station site, the city’s housing action plan, and the preparation for the annual town festival. He listed several ways that the city will be making its decisions more transparent and improving connections with local residents, including improving its website and increasing the range of transactions that can be conducted there, expanding its social media presence, and enhancing the video presentation of council deliberations.

Linnell said that all of these steps will be taken with a single goal in mind: to move Algona forward.

“We won’t forget our past, but we will forge our future. As I think about the history of Algona, that’s what people here have always done,” Linnell said. “They have always been proud of their home town; they have dreamed of ways to make it better; and they have taken action to chart their future.”

“It’s our responsibility to carry on that legacy,” he added. “And it’s a very exciting time to live in Algona.”

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